

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 PM-04 L-03 INR-07 NSC-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 AF-08 SAM-01 OMB-01 /059 W

----- 123106

R 211045Z SEP 76

FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1531

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

COMUSFORAZ

USCINCEUR

CINCLANT

AMCONSUL OPORTO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO

SUBJ: AZOREAN DEVELOPMENTS

1. IN A RECENT NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW, MOTA AMARAL, HEAD OF THE AZOREAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT, MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

--THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT IS TO RESTRUCTURE THE GOVERNMENT WHICH IN THE PAST HAD BEEN DIVIDED INTO THREE DISTRICTS. IN ADDITION THERE NEEDS TO BE A PROGRESSIVE TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS FROM THE CENTRAL TO REGIONAL GOVERNMENT.

--THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO GIVE PRIORITY TO DRAWING UP A REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

--THERE WILL BE A "PRUDENT" OPENING FOR FOREIGN INVESTMENT, BUT NOT AN ABSORPTION OF THE AZOREAN ECONOMY BY MULTI-NAIONALS. THIS QUESTION INVOLVES DELICATE MONETARY, FISCAL, FINANCIAL AND EXCHANGE PROBLEMS WHICH MUST BE WORKED OUT WITH CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

--THE UNIONSHIN THE AZORES HAVE PROMISED COMPREHENSION AND COLOBORATION AS LONG AS THE GOVERNMENT DEFENDS WORKERS INTERESTS,

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WHICH IT WILL DO.

--THE LABOUR PROBLEMS AT LAJES BASE ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES, BUT THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT WILL ATTEMPT TO CHANGE THIS DURING THE UPCOMING BASE NEGOTIATIONS.

--THE LACK OF DIRECT BENEFIT TO THE AZORES FROM THE U.S. PRESENCE AT LAJES IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE LACK OF ATTENTION LISBON GAVE TO THE AZORES. THIS NEGLECT EXPLAINS THE RESENTMENT EXISTING IN THE AZORES TOWARD THE CONTINENT.

--THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT AND ASSEMBLY WILL DEFEND AUTONOMY WITHOUT THE LEAST INTENTION OF FOMENTING CONFLICTS, BUT WILL SEEK COLABORATION AND COOPERATION FROM THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT HAS SAID IT WILL FOLLOW THE SAME POLICY.

--A CERTAIN DEGREE OF INTRA-ISLAND RIVALRY IS THE RESULT OF INSULARITY BUT THIS IS A PROBLEM THAT CAN BE RESOLVED. THE EXPERIENCE IN THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL HELP.

--TO SPEAK OF FLA'S VIEW POINT IS PURE SPECULATION SINCE IT HAS NOT CIRCULAED ANY PAMPHLETS IN SOME TIME. FAIPA (FRENTE DE APOIO A INDEPENDENCIA ACORIANO) AND MSE (MOVEMENTO SEPARATISTA ESTUDANTIL) HAVE BEEN MORE ACTIVE RECENTLY. AZOREAN OPINION ON INDEPENDENCE ALWAYS DEPENDS ON THE SITUATION ON THE CONTINENT.

2. IN A PRIVATE CONVERSATION, MOTA AMARAL MADE THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS:

--HE IS SOMEWHAT SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE DEGREE OF SUPPORT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WILL GIVE THE AZORES.

--HE BELIEVES THE MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC, GEN. GALVAO DE FIGUAIREDO, IS DISPOSED TO WORK FOR THE REGION VIS-A-VIS LISBON.

--HE IS MODERATELY OPTIMISTIC WITH REGARDS TO UNION AND LABOR PROBLEMS IN THE REGION. (NOTE: A MONTH OR TWO AGO LOCAL LEADERS CONSIDERED THE GROWING NUMBER OF STRIKES AND LABOR UNREST ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT PROBLEMS FACING THE NEW REGIONAL GOVERNMENT.)

--HE EXPECTS THAT NEGOTIATIONS ON THE LAJEY BASE AGREEMENT WILL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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START IN JANUARY 1977.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN INVESTMENT, AZORES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PONTA00397
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760356-0878
From: PONTA DELGADA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760937/aaaabflc.tel
Line Count: 109
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <30 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AZOREAN DEVELOPMENTS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO, (AMARAL, MOTA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006